

# AmeriCorps Frequently Asked Questions

## What is AmeriCorps?

AmeriCorps is known as the "domestic Peace Corps." Participants - known as AmeriCorps members - perform a year of service with a program focused on meeting local community needs. AmeriCorps programs focus on the five issues of Education, Healthy Futures, Environment, Veterans, and Economic Opportunity. Members will also receive an education award directly from the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Individual programs recruit and train their own members with funding from an AmeriCorps grant. Serve Idaho AmeriCorps grants provide funding for member living allowances, health benefits, childcare (for eligible members), AmeriCorps program staff, training, evaluation and other program operating costs. A successful applicant is also required to match at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period.

## What types of activities can AmeriCorps members perform?

AmeriCorps members engage in a variety of direct service activities in the areas of:

**Education** - Unmet educational needs within communities especially those that help children and youth improve grade-level performance and improve graduation rates for students.

**Healthy Futures** - Unmet health needs within communities including access to health care, disease prevention and health promotion initiatives, and health literacy.

**Environmental Stewardship** - Unmet energy-efficiency and environmental needs within communities.

**Veterans** - Unmet needs of veterans, by increasing economic, educational and health opportunities for veterans and military families by leveraging national service, including veterans serving veterans.

**Opportunity** - Unmet needs relating to economic opportunity for economically disadvantaged individuals within communities including financial stability, access to affordable housing, and employment opportunities for economically vulnerable families.

Disaster Services - Unmet needs relating to communities in regards to disasters including increased capacity of communities to serve vulnerable populations in the event of a disaster and improve communities in disaster-affected areas.



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## **How can I get AmeriCorps members to help with my program?**

Serve Idaho does not provide AmeriCorps members directly to programs. Instead, Serve Idaho provides grants that support local partnerships to recruit, train, and support AmeriCorps members throughout a year of service.

## **Is it possible to be a placement site for AmeriCorps members, but not actually administer an AmeriCorps program (i.e., how do I get one or two AmeriCorps members for my organization)?**

Serve Idaho generally requires that a program support a minimum of 10 member service year (MSY) members. Serve Idaho realizes that many organizations lack the capacity to supervise and adequately provide for 10 MSY members. In such cases, organizations are advised to seek intermediaries, form partnerships with other organizations or contact an existing AmeriCorps program.

## **What types of benefits do AmeriCorps members receive?**

Full-time AmeriCorps members receive a living allowance, health insurance, childcare (if eligible), and for those members who successfully complete a term of AmeriCorps service will receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award.

## **How much are AmeriCorps members paid?**

The AmeriCorps member living allowance varies from program to program. For the 2011-2012 program year, a full-time member must receive a minimum living allowance of at least \$12,530 and no more than \$25,060. Programs can decide on the living allowance that they will pay their members so long as it falls within this range.

## **What, exactly, is an education award?**

A Segal AmeriCorps Education Award is commonly compared to a scholarship. However, AmeriCorps education awards are much more flexible than typical scholarships. Each AmeriCorps member who successfully completes a term of service will receive an education award that can be applied to pay education expenses at qualified institutions of higher education, for educational training, or to repay qualified student loans. They have up to seven years after their term of service has ended to claim the award. For more information on the education award, visit the AmeriCorps website.



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## **Do placement sites contribute financially to the cost of supporting AmeriCorps members? If so, what is the cost that would be involved for the organization?**

Partner contributions to AmeriCorps programs depend on the structure of individual partnerships and programs. In some cases, placement sites do contribute cash to the program (the amount varies by program). In other cases, placement sites might contribute in-kind services, supplies, trainers, facilities, evaluation expertise, or other services and equipment. Each partnership is unique to a given location and program.

## **Who can apply for an AmeriCorps grant?**

Non-profits, local and state government agencies, faith-based and community organizations, Indian-tribes, school districts, institutions of higher learning and partnerships of these entities are eligible to apply for funding. Agencies must have the capacity to manage federal funds. The Corporation for National and Community Service encourages Agencies who have never received AmeriCorps funds to apply.

## **How do I apply?**

You must apply using the [eGrants](#) on-line application form. Grant applications must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. The DUNS number is known as the universal identifier and helps the federal government improve statistical reports on federal grants and cooperative agreements. The DUNS number will not replace the EIN. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost [online](#) or by calling the DUNS number request line at 866.705.5711. It may take up to 30 days to receive a DUNS number after applying.



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